



Restorative Justice and Reentry

Healing victims, preparing
offenders

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RJ – the idea

- Crime harms relationships
- Offenders aren't learning consequences of their actions
- Incarceration damages support networks
- Victims have needs – many are not met through traditional court process
- Communities resistant to accept returning offenders

The 3 R's of Reentry

“Perhaps it is time for us to move away from what is seen as another ‘offender-centered’ approach to one that is by definition more clearly victim-, community-, and harm centered.”

RJ – the idea

- Crime harms relationships
 - Attempt to repair relationships
- Offenders aren't learning consequences of their actions
 - Employ *informal* networks
- Incarceration damages support networks
 - Use incarceration to strengthen social bonds *before* release
- Victims have needs – many are not met through traditional court process
 - Give victims a role in reentry process
- Communities resistant to accept returning offenders
 - 'Earned Redemption'

RJ – the practice

- Face-to-face, structured, meeting between offender and those who were harmed to address the consequences of the incident and decide what should be done to repair the harm.
 - Voluntary
 - Preparation is key
 - Offender must be eligible

RJ – the goals

- Prepare offender for reentry
 - Develop empathy
 - Strengthen ties
 - Talk about the 'real' issues before release
 - Feel better
- Help victims heal
 - Less anger, fear, ptsd symptoms
 - Better able to move on
 - Less likely to believe it will happen again
- Community safety / receptiveness

Where/when can RJ occur?

- As a diversion from court
- Before court
- After trial, before sentencing
- As intermediate sanction
- In prison
- After release

RJ – the evidence

- Nationwide/Worldwide
 - Changes offenders' attitudes
 - Can reduce reoffending
 - Positive outcomes for victims
- Experiment at IREF – began 2008
 - Reduction in Criminogenic Risk Factors
 - Increase in empathy (pre-post conference)
 - Increase in social support
 - Lower levels of uncertainty/fear about reentry
 - Reduction in facility infractions & disc transfers



“Victims’ voices must be heard, and
they must be given a role.”















